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on Thursday, 30 June 1994, at 3 p.m.

President:	Mr. BUTLER	(Australia)
later:	Mrs. WAZIR ALI (Vice-President)	(Pakistan)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION (continued) (A/49/204-E/1994/90, A/49/205-E/1994/91, E/1994/34, Parts I, II and III, E/1994/35, E/1994/64 and Add.1 and 2, E/1994/84 and E/1994/93)

Mr. MARUYAMA (Japan), noting that the worldwide decline in official development assistance (ODA) was unlikely to improve in the near future, said that despite domestic economic difficulties, Japan had increased its ODA. It was of critical importance to maintain the system of voluntary contributions as it allowed for a very flexible response to a range of needs and purposes. At the same time, in order for the United Nations development system to improve the stability of its resource base, it must improve its efficiency and effectiveness thus demonstrating its responsibility to donor countries.

Turning to the country strategy note, he said that it provided a basis for a comprehensive and coherent development plan and should be further promoted; it would be interesting to hear about any problems other countries had experienced in formulating and implementing such notes. The efforts of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP) to harmonize the programming cycles of various United Nations agencies should be encouraged. While the programme approach was useful in maximizing existing resources, methods for assessing its results must be improved. Recipient countries must take responsibility for national execution thus ensuring that external assistance was effectively utilized.

Concerning the resident coordinator system, which his country strongly supported, efforts made to strengthen it should reflect the requirements of the countries concerned; the experiences and views of the resident coordinators should also be fully reflected in future decision-making. He

sought information on obstacles encountered in efforts to decentralize the organization as well as on the contents of training being provided to staff in the field.

Mr. SUCHARIPA (Observer for Austria) said that given the decreasing contributions from the donor community, special efforts would have to be made to secure better coordination and integration of operational activities; in that regard, a series of measures should be undertaken. His delegation considered the programme approach a very useful tool for strengthening collaboration among the various United Nations programmes and agencies. Austria also supported the country strategy note which was a frame of reference for promoting cooperation within the United Nations system.

The common interpretation of the concept of national execution should be the norm for executing United Nations operational activities as it would enhance capacity-building in programme activities. Austria also supported the strengthening of the role of the resident coordinator who would have to facilitate a multi-disciplinary approach and consult with all the actors involved. It also supported the 20:20 compact which addressed the most urgent basic human development needs while providing for the most effective utilization of resources.

Ms. FRECHETTE (Canada), referring to the 20:20 compact put forward by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), said that her Government strongly believed that increased attention to social sector spending, particularly basic human needs, was critical to the success of development efforts. The critical issue was how to ensure that the definition of human development priorities met the concerns of both donors and recipient Governments. In preparation for the World Summit for Social Development, the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council should work together with member Governments and other key actors in order to reach a common understanding that would help to ensure that efforts were increasingly people-centred.

Canada was a strong supporter of the country strategy note as it was the best way to ensure that programme countries not only got what they needed but also got it in a coherent way that made the most efficient use of the resources available. National Governments and the representatives of United Nations development agencies in the field would have to work on the country strategy notes. In that regard, well-functioning field committees would be a prerequisite. Resident coordinators would also have to ensure that the work of agencies not represented in the field was taken fully into consideration. Finally, her delegation believed that the reform of the United Nations in the economic and social fields provided the international community with a golden opportunity to put the emphasis on the individual country rather than on individual agencies.

Mr. WISNARMURTI (Indonesia) said that although some progress had been achieved in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 47/199, much remained to be accomplished. In that connection, if the trend towards declining resources for operational activities persisted, it would severely curtail the ability of developing countries to meet their development goals and the United Nations system to discharge its mandates. Therefore, concrete action and renewed commitment by the major donors was of particular importance. It was equally important that consultations on the governance and funding structure of the operational activities should be undertaken in a spirit of partnership and constructive dialogue. Referring to General Assembly resolution 47/199, he noted that it was vital for the Organization to increase the efficiency of its operational activities otherwise it would not be able to play its role properly. In that connection, steps must be taken to curtail administrative costs. His delegation welcomed the efforts of JCGP to set targets for increasing the number of common premises and for consolidating administrative services. The harmonization of the programming cycles of the various members of JCGP with that of the development plans, strategies and budget cycles of recipient countries should also be addressed.

While his delegation supported the increased use of the programme approach, there was a need to further enhance awareness and knowledge of that approach as well as the benefits to be derived therefrom. He also welcomed the United Nations' commitment to national execution as a central norm of its operational activities. The United Nations' role in, and capacity for providing technical assistance to developing countries should be further strengthened in order to ensure that such commitment could be translated into reality. That was why priority attention should continue to be given to the need to strengthen the functioning of the resident coordinator system.

Mrs. WAZIR ALI (Pakistan) said that the steady decline and unpredictable nature of financial commitments made to the United Nations development system might jeopardize the initiatives of newly installed democratic Governments. The diminishing amount of resources being allocated to development and the increases in financing for emergency relief reflected not only political choices on the part of donors but also changing priorities. In that regard, specific data on the benefits accruing from development and emergency assistance programmes to each donor country would be useful.

There was a danger that the restructured Executive Boards of United Nations funds and programmes would become increasingly donor driven. The success of any programme required the participation of donors and recipients alike, and the latter must be fully involved in all decisions taken by the Boards. Development driven donor assistance programmes not only distorted the development goals of the countries concerned but also led to a considerable waste of scarce resources.

She pointed out that the primary responsibility for preparing country strategy notes rested with the recipient Governments involved. Documents prepared by United Nations agencies, however well-intentioned, were no substitute for management by a Government of its economy. Moreover, while a programme approach was critical to success in the development process, it presented the United Nations system as a whole with a challenge, for it called for coordination within the system, on the one hand, and with national

priorities on the other. Thus far her delegation has seen little evidence of the former.

Mr. CAMARA (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)) said that operational activities for development were of the greatest importance to FAO, which provided well over $US 300 million for technical cooperation activities annually. Those activities were aimed at improving food security through increased food production and enhanced access to food. Because rural people constituted more than one half of the world's population and almost two thirds of the developing world, FAO's operational activities must focus on those who derived their livelihood from the agricultural sector, and especially on low-income food-deficit countries. A major new programme had recently been endorsed to increase food production in support of food security in those countries. A streamlined structure also had been endorsed to provide a consolidated base at Headquarters for the provision of direct services to FAO's member nations through assistance on policy, investment and the implementation of field operations, as well as increased decentralized technical capacities at the regional and subregional levels to ensure more direct access to FAO's experience and expertise in technical fields. Adequate financial resources should be made available for such assistance on an assured basis.

FAO fully supported the programme approach and national execution. However, a clearer division of labour among the specialized agencies was required, and full use should be made of the agencies, particularly their technical support services, throughout all stages of programmes and projects executed by national Governments. FAO sought to ensure sustainability by increasing the use of existing national capacities in its programmes and projects.

Although UNDP remained a major development partner of FAO and was still the largest single source of funds for projects, its share of the total assistance delivered by FAO in 1993 had declined substantially, and the outlook did not indicate a change in that trend. FAO regretted the overall

shortage in funding of UNDP core activities, which had led to a reduction of country indicative planning figures (IPFs).

Welcome steps had been taken to establish more substantive collaboration and systematic dialogue with UNDP in various areas, most notably in the field of food security. FAO also was preparing a monograph for UNDP on capacity-building requirements for the sustainable development of agriculture, fisheries and forestry. The tripartite nature of UNDP programmes should ensure that adequate technical support was obtained from the specialized agencies, whose involvement also should be sought in UNDP activities not funded from its core resources. FAO was ready to enhance its collaboration with UNDP in that regard.

FAO also called for closer collaboration with the Office for Project Services (OPS), which should lead to the increased involvement of FAO in OPS activities through technical and direct input-related services. Recalling the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolution 48/162, he emphasized that the World Food Programme had been conceived and established jointly by the United Nations and FAO and that decisions concerning the future governance of WFP were their shared responsibility. The resolution assigned to the Economic and Social Council an enhanced policy role with respect to programmes and funds, a role which FAO expected the Economic and Social Council and the FAO Council to share with respect to WFP. It was important that WFP should continue to have recourse to FAO's expertise in order to relate food aid to broader food security and agricultural development issues. FAO thus looked forward to working closely on the elaboration of the draft resolution called for in resolution 48/162. The text which emerged would in turn provide input for the adoption of a parallel resolution at the FAO Conference in November 1995.

Mrs. Wazir Ali (Pakistan) took the Chair.

Mr. KUDRYAVTSEV (Russian Federation) said that his Government attached great importance to increasing the efficiency of the operational activities of the United Nations within the framework of the concept of stable

human development. To that end, inter-agency coordination both at Headquarters and in the field must be further improved. That required a strengthening of the coordinating functions of JCGP and of the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ). Another effective tool was the resident coordinator system. There was a need to strengthen field coordination committees so as to harmonize programming cycles and improve the mechanism of preparing country strategies, with the active participation of field representatives and resident coordinators. Greater use of common premises would help strengthen coordination, promote inter-agency cooperation and reduce administrative costs.

The further development and consolidation of the programme approach and national execution were important means of increasing the efficiency of operational activities. His delegation supported the idea of an individualized programme approach linked to national plans and priorities and noted with satisfaction the progress achieved in that area. In order to expand national execution, it was necessary to pay closer attention to the creation of national capacity in recipient countries. Joint programmes in human resources development, environmental protection and the fight against HIV/AIDS were good examples of real improvements in inter-agency cooperation.

There was an urgent need for a comprehensive approach to the concept of sustainable human development. The inter-disciplinary nature of that concept could encourage the United Nations agencies to combine their efforts to achieve socially oriented and environmentally sound development and create a broad basis for the elaboration of new approaches to multilateral cooperation. Mutual recognition of national interests, economic partnership, equitable access to markets and the responsibility of States for their economic policies should form the basis of such approaches. His delegation agreed that there must be a rational division of labour between the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions, other multilateral organizations and non-governmental groups concerned with technical assistance, on the basis of their comparative advantage.

In the search for optimal forms and methods of work of the governing bodies of UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF, it was important to be guided by a flexible and pragmatic attitude, especially in the first year of transition. A comprehensive analysis of their activities should be carried out in 1995, and adjustments should be made, if necessary.

His delegation agreed with other delegations on the need to maintain the practice of making voluntary contributions and at the same time increase the effectiveness of the use of financial resources, which would help offset the shortfall of funds. It supported the efforts of the Administrator to mobilize additional resources.

A comprehensive, integrated and universal approach must be taken to the issues of international cooperation for development, including operational activities. His delegation welcomed the intensification of the activities of UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA on the problems of the "economies in transition", especially in respect of establishing and strengthening the institutional, legislative and managerial foundations of market economies, promoting entrepreneurship, enhancing external economic relations, attracting foreign investment, and reducing the social costs of market reforms, especially for the most vulnerable population groups. In that context, the decision of the UNICEF Executive Board to establish a special unit dealing with the problems of the countries in transition was welcome; his delegation hoped that the UNDP Division for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States would soon be transformed into a regional bureau.

Mr. Butler (Australia) resumed the Chair.

Mr. ANSARI (India) said that the goal of the operational activities of the United Nations system was a partnership to promote individual and collective self-reliance through endogenous capacity-building in developing countries. The United Nations system was expected to remain mindful of the specific mandates for the partnership as defined in a series of General Assembly resolutions. His delegation noted that considerable efforts had been made to improve the governance of United Nations funds and

programmes, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 48/162, and it wondered whether equal efforts had been made to ensure more stable, predictable and assured funding. It was time to focus not on theoretical redefinitions but, rather, on concrete action to promote sustainable growth and development in developing countries.

No new funding mechanism would succeed without the political commitment to share the world's dwindling resources on a more equitable basis, in order to optimize universal welfare. Innovative proposals like the 20:20 proposal which did not generate additional resources might even result in reductions, and did not enjoy a consensus. His country had increased its contribution at the most recent pledging conference. It was unfortunate that the core funding for the year had shown a marked decline.

His delegation also was concerned at the attempts to chip away at the principles of sovereignty, universality, neutrality and partnership. The developing countries were being asked to tailor internal policies to yardsticks which bore little relevance to their needs; moreover, while conditionalities were imposed on developing countries, the obligations of the developed nations were being glossed over. His delegation was particularly concerned at what appeared to be an attempt to determine the contours of future international cooperation. The various responsibilities and the limits of international obligations arising from the past must be assessed before they were heralded as steps for the future. Sustained economic growth in developing countries, without any external restrictions or interference, was the only way to improve the general welfare through a higher level of development.

The Human Development Report 1994 set aside recognized quantitative yardsticks accepted by Member States and sought, using new qualitative inputs not yet endorsed in any decision or resolution, to pass moral judgements on Member States. It also utilized data selectively and was thus incomplete and inaccurate. It should therefore be treated as no more than a compendium of views expressed by a group of economists for study by Member States.

Scarce resources would be more successfully absorbed if decisions on their utilization were left entirely to recipient Governments, which were the best judges of what the national requirements were. Disproportionate emphasis on external advisers and programme managers would be detrimental to the development of indigenous technology and expertise. The more such resources were utilized for the transfer of appropriate technology, the more progress would be made towards national execution. Developing countries which were capable of national execution also were capable of independently evaluating and monitoring programmes.

Resident coordinators had played a crucial role in the coordination of development activities, and they should not be burdened with other activities. Lastly, it was too early to assess the working of the newly restructured Executive Boards. They did appear to be functioning more efficiently, and the commitment of all Member States to ensuring the effective implementation of General Assembly resolution 48/162 was unquestioned.

Mr. NIE (China) said that his delegation endorsed the statement made by the representative of Algeria on behalf of the Group of 77. His delegation was deeply concerned at the programme reductions and reduced activities that had been necessary owing to the inadequate funding of operational activities for development. It hoped that the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/48/940 would facilitate an expeditious solution of the problem. The level of resources made available was a reflection of political choices made by Member States, and no funding mechanism could by itself determine total resource flows. The developed countries had a greater responsibility in that regard, particularly the major donors, who had yet to increase their contributions for United Nations operational activities for development. Without adequate resources, those activities would be weakened and efforts to restructure economic and social sectors rendered ineffective.

General Assembly resolution 47/199 provided integrated and comprehensive guidelines for operational activities for development. His delegation hoped

that all the specialized agencies of the United Nations system would make substantive progress in their respective field in the implementation of that resolution and that the triennial policy review slated for 1995 would show satisfactory results.

The purpose and effect of the country strategy notes was not very clear. His delegation hoped that the agencies would respect the wishes of the Governments concerned and avoid assuring their role. The agencies must still address the need for improved coordination and decentralization at the field level. His delegation did not wish to see year after year statements on the need to strengthen coordination and decentralization and yet see no substantive progress in programme planning and approval. The restructuring of the Economic and Social Council and the various programmes and funds operating in the field should result in greater progress in the future.

Lastly, his delegation endorsed the views expressed by the representative of India concerning the Human Development Report 1994.

Mr. PASHOVSKI (Bulgaria) said that his delegation attached particular importance to the preparatory work undertaken by the Council with regard to the 1995 comprehensive triennial policy review of operational activities for development and believed that a clear picture of the status of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 47/199 would prove very useful. Development assistance through the United Nations system should continue to play a major role in fostering the development of recipient countries. His delegation therefore shared the concern expressed regarding the downward trend in the level of resources for those activities and, in light of decision 94/16 of the Executive Board of UNDP, it hoped that resources would be found to restore indicative planning figures to the original levels. The operational activities of the United Nations system should be strengthened while preserving the principles of universality and non-conditionality and the voluntary nature of contributions to defray their cost, in cooperation with donors and recipients alike.

A careful assessment of the progress made in implementing the programme approach and the use of country strategy notes was needed. The programme approach could open new opportunities for strengthening the capacity of Governments to manage inputs and activities and integrate policy-making and priority setting into operational programmes, thereby promoting the sustainability of development initiatives. It also could help attract additional resources and concentrate them on development areas with the greatest need for resources. The primary responsibility for programme execution should rest with recipient Governments. National execution and the programme approach were mutually supportive and could therefore help facilitate the integration of all facets of development cooperation.

The efficiency of the operational activities of the United Nations system could be streamlined by strengthening the field structure. Decentralization would improve responsiveness to the needs of recipient countries and ensure better coordination with their Governments. His delegation therefore supported efforts by UNDP to implement innovative approaches, which should be applied on a country-by-country basis with the active assistance of the resident coordinator. His country looked forward to enhanced and more efficient cooperation with the various United Nations programmes and agencies through the UNDP office in Sofia.

Guided by the principle of universality, the system should respond to all countries in need of assistance. He drew attention to the acute problems encountered by the countries in transition. In his own country, the strict implementation of trade and economic sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) compounded the impact of the sanctions against Iraq and Libya on his country and seriously undermined ongoing economic reform and jeopardized the democratic process. His delegation therefore hoped that the appropriate assistance would be provided in compliance with General Assembly resolution 48/210 and looked forward to more concrete approaches in that regard.

Mr. MANZ (Observer for Switzerland) said that the 1995 triennial policy review of operational activities should concentrate on the operationalization of the agenda for development. Furthermore, the financing arrangements must be reviewed, since it was crucial that the development activities of the system should be based on a solid financing mechanism.

His delegation welcomed the many positive experiences of field coordination; it seemed that, finally, the importance of better coherence among the different entities of the system had been recognized. It was only on the basis of truly interdisciplinary cooperation that the United Nations could continue to play its particular role in development cooperation. His delegation hoped that the efforts of the ILO training centre at Turin would be pursued so as to strengthen United Nations teamwork at the field level. It remained necessary to provide substantial support as well as appropriate means to the resident coordinators so that they could fulfil their functions; UNDP had a special responsibility in that regard.

His delegation was somewhat uneasy about the rather narrow interpretation given to the country strategy note which, in its view, should promote real interaction between the different actors and programmes of the system. When preparing a country strategy note, it was important to analyse, not only specific country needs, but also the resources that different United Nations entities could assemble in that country. Then, taking into account the input of other actors, a small number of priority areas of action should be selected for the United Nations system. The objective should be for the system to have the best possible impact in each country, through integrated action. In the next triennial review, special attention needed to be directed towards follow-up.

His delegation was somewhat disappointed with the evaluation of the experience gained in national execution, since it had expected a comparative appreciation of the impact and sustainability of nationally executed programmes and projects compared with other programmes and projects. Such a study should be conducted for the 1995 triennial review.

Mr. CHOWDHURY (Bangladesh) said that since economic policy reforms were being undertaken in most developing countries, the operational activities of the United Nations system had to adapt to that new situation. Bangladesh appreciated the steps taken thus far to implement the recommendations contained in General Assembly resolution 47/199, the increasing interaction and collaboration amongst the organizations of the United Nations, and the efforts of JCGP.

His delegation noted with deep concern that at a time of growing needs at the country level, contributions to the funds and programmes of the United Nations system had declined significantly, even though General Assembly resolutions 48/162 and 47/199 had clearly spelt out the need for a substantial increase in resources for operational activities for development. The developing countries regarded development support through the United Nations system as an important supplement to their national efforts.

His delegation felt that the preparation of country strategy notes should be undertaken only at the request of Member States, as envisaged in General Assembly resolution 47/199. As it was a new concept, there should be more studies on the details of the note. While welcoming the programme approach, Bangladesh felt that sustained efforts were needed to make programmes more responsive to national priorities and to involve national planning authorities in planning and executing them fully. There should be increased use of national expertise and institutions in both the formulation and the implementation of programmes and projects by United Nations funds and programmes.

In establishing a unified presence of the United Nations at field level, differences of thrust, interest and mandates of the various funds and programmes of the United Nations should be taken into account.

His delegation hoped that priority would continue to be placed on the needs of the least developed countries, particularly when allocating indicative planning figures. The triennial policy review would provide an

opportunity to take concrete measures to implement the recommendations of the mid-term review.

Mr. CHO (Republic of Korea) said that his delegation was pleased that development had begun to take its due place on the international agenda. the next step was to work toward the effective implementation of operational activities for development. In that regard, sustainable human development should continue to be the underlying goal. The first requirement was capacity building in developing countries. That could be achieved only through human resources development, which in turn was based upon strong primary and secondary education.

It was recognized that good governance and democratization were essential to the self-reliant efforts of developing countries. However, the need for strong and efficient governance also applied to the United Nations system. In particular, action-oriented programmes were needed to complement the efforts of developing countries. Coordination was crucial. The establishment of field-level coordinating mechanisms in 74 countries by UNDP was a major step forward in strengthening the coordinating role of the United Nations system. Further efforts needed to be made to strengthen the coordination of field offices so that the United Nations system would be able to provide the overall management needed to ensure the effective implementation of operational activities.

Resident coordinators must be given authority to develop overall assistance strategies through dialogue with the recipient Governments. In coordination among agencies, a monitoring function was needed to ensure that the mandate of each organization was strictly adhered to and that no organization was marginalized on the agendas of more powerful, self-interested actors. The Council could play an instrumental role to that end.

His delegation noted with concern that funds for operational activities for development had continued to decrease and that the share of core funds given to development by UNDP had continued to fall. His delegation appreciated the Administrator's efforts to mobilize more funds. It commended

the reform efforts of UNDP and, in general, supported the various initiatives to strengthen substantive partnership with other agencies and institutions and in particular welcomed the plan to assign a senior liaison officer in Washington for the purpose of fostering closer relations with the World Bank.

Mr. HOVE (Zimbabwe) said that his delegation was concerned at the diminishing amount of resources being made available for the operational activities of the United Nations development system. The situation was all the more disturbing since many countries were making strenuous efforts to create an environment conducive to international cooperation for development against a background of increasing development needs. UNDP, for example, had cut its commitments to 70 per cent of the indicative planning figures, which was not only potentially disruptive to ongoing projects but which also caused distortions in national development plans.

The issue of resources was also linked to that of national execution. The increased use of the national execution modality gave countries greater flexibility to engage local expertise, thereby reducing the outflow of resources provided by UNDP and other United Nations agencies.

Zimbabwe believed that the country strategy note could be an effective tool for strengthened coordination at the national level. However, in order to prepare a meaningful country strategy note, the recipient Government needed to undertake a comprehensive review of the economy in order to determine the priority areas. Once fully developed, the country strategy note should be comprehensive, involving not only United Nations agencies and recipient Governments but also bilateral and non-governmental actors.

He welcomed the efforts being made by UNDP, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UNICEF and WFP to harmonize their programme cycles. Programme cycles which were consistent with national development plans would ensure better coordination among the agencies themselves and between them and the recipient country Governments. Governments would also be able to access all the funds available to them from the funding agencies in any given programme cycle.

National execution should be the principal modality for United Nations funded programmes and projects. The most important factor in determining whether a recipient country should take over the execution of a programme or project, however, should be that country's capacity to do so. The level of development of a recipient country should dictate the pace at which national execution could be undertaken. For its part, the United Nations system should assist recipient countries in strengthening their national execution capabilities. Over the years, Zimbabwe had been steadily increasing its capacity for national execution. Some of the major nationally-executed undertakings included the economic reform programme funded by UNDP and the population policy project supported by UNFPA.

The Bretton Woods institutions increasingly performed functions similar to those traditionally carried out by the United Nations development agencies and programmes. Instead of competition, greater cooperation and consultation were needed between those institutions and the United Nations as they pursued their common goal of promoting sustainable human development.

Mr. KELLOWAY (Australia) said that the new arrangements for the Council's consideration of development issues provided an opportunity to move beyond rhetoric to practically focused outcomes. The Council now had the means at its disposal to provide the policy and coordination guidance which had eluded it in the past.

As a result of the adoption of General Assembly resolution 47/199, a definite improvement could already been seen in the work of the United Nations agencies, particularly the member agencies of JCGP, including considerable effort to improve performance and avoid duplication. There was much greater scope for dialogue within the Council on key aspects of development policy. As the funds and programmes moved together in implementing programmes, it became more feasible to engage constructively on experience in the field as a basis for obtaining consensus at a broad political level on the key development policy issues. The 20/20 concept was one such item which was well worth exploring.

Prioritization of functions and the need to avoid overlap in mandates must continue to receive attention - and it seemed that different agencies had different approaches to that question. The exchange of memoranda of understanding between agencies to avoid overlap was a positive step forward.

Coordination, both at Headquarters and in the field, remained a top priority. Coordination between the JCGP agencies seemed to be moving ahead well; but there was less clarity in the role and links with the specialized agencies, most of which incorporated development functions to varying degrees. Their role in development could be further clarified. Furthermore, the terms of reference of field-level country committees needed to be defined, in particular so as to determine whether they were contributing to the review of various agency programmes.

He asked whether it was expected that more countries would adopt country strategy notes, now that guidelines had been promulgated. The Council should review the adequacy of coordination arrangements with the international financial institutions. The impact and overall effectiveness of agencies was a critical area. Evaluation standards were needed so as to gain a clearer picture of the overall performance of agencies. His delegation recognized the technical difficulties in obtaining a common approach among agencies on evaluation but felt that it was absolutely critical that the agencies should be able to report on how successful they had been and what they had learned from their mistakes.

Mr. PHANIT (Observer for Thailand) said that development was primarily a national responsibility and only through greater self-reliance could a country increase its capacity to absorb assistance from the international community and to play a more active role in international development c operation. The key to development did not lie in official development or in support from the United Nations. Rather, it lay in such factors as political stability, good governance and pragmatic development policies.

The development efforts of States must also be supported by an enabling international environment, which required the liberalization of global trading policies. It was important that all trading partners should observe the rules of free and fair trade. Moreover, in order to ensure the efficient allocation of the world's resources, trade and environmental protection must be mutually compatible.

The agenda for development should serve as an instrument for coordinating activities both within the United Nations and between the Organization, the Bretton Woods institutions and non-governmental organizations. It should be an instrument for creating a unity of purpose in both the policy and operational spheres of those organizations. The agenda for peace and the agenda for development were equally crucial to current efforts to reform the United Nations. The reformed Organization, however, should not spread itself too thinly. United Nations development support could not and should not provide all the answers to the development challenges of all countries. The programmes and funds of the Organization, especially the United Nations Development Programme, must focus on areas of greatest need. In that connection, the agenda for development should serve as a map of the thematic approaches to operational activities. His delegation hoped that the agenda for development would go beyond the development concept and guide the United Nations towards the full realization of its people-centred development mandate.

Mr. SYCHOV (Belarus) said that his delegation supported the efforts to improve inter-agency coordination through JCGP and CCPOQ and was gratified that work had begun on improving coordination at the field level. It believed that resident coordinators should play a more active role in coordinating the efforts of various United Nations bodies at the country level, working out country strategies and harmonizing the programme cycles of the United Nations agencies. It actively supported a further expansion of the "joint premises" concept; his Government had created favourable conditions to that end.

His delegation agreed that the programme approach was useful for the Governments of recipient countries and helped strengthen inter-agency cooperation. The progress made in strengthening national capacity and execution in recipient countries was very important, and those efforts should be continued.

His delegation supported the idea of holding a full-scale review in 1995 of the activities of UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF; they had already been successful in funding effective and flexible forms of activity.

His delegation felt that a system of international cooperation should be developed within the United Nations which would contribute to the mobilization of external resources, both technical and financial, for the needs of peace, the economy, the environment, society and democracy.

The Council must ensure effective coordination of operational activities within the United Nations system, including the activities of the Bretton Woods institutions. It was very important to make more efficient use of financial assistance provided by IMF and the World Bank and also of the technical assistance provided through UNDP and other United Nations programmes, funds and specialized agencies.

The main characteristic of United Nations operational activity was its universality. His delegation welcomed the recent intensification of the work of UNDP and UNICEF on the problems of countries in transition. The decision taken by the UNICEF Executive Board to create a subdivision on central and eastern Europe, the CIS countries and the Baltic countries was to be welcomed. The UNDP Division for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States should now be made a regional office.

In 1994, his Government had approved a short-term country programme for Belarus; it was the first such programme in the history of Belarus, and would be a basis for the formulation of a document on national strategy. His delegation hoped that the country programme would be submitted without delay to the managing bodies, programmes, funds and specialized agencies of the United Nations system.

His delegation was concerned about the reduction of resources for programme implementation and believed that the directors of programmes, funds and agencies of the United Nations development system should make efforts to restore previous levels of resources for development.

Mr. FLORÊNCIO (Brazil) said that better governance of operational activities was vital to the reform of the United Nations. Success also required that a substantial increase in resources for operational activities should be assured on a predictable and continuous basis. It was therefore essential that the consultations on the financing of operational activities should proceed in the appropriate working group of the General Assembly.

The first function of the high-level segment of the Council's current session was to examine the stage of implementation of the provisions adopted under the triennial review of operational activities. The second function was to consider the reports of the Executive Boards of the various funds and programmes of the United Nations system. The final function was to provide cross-sectoral coordination and overall guidance on a system-wide basis and to monitor the division of labour between and cooperation within the various bodies of the United Nations system. In that connection, the Council should identify a list of themes for consideration at the subsequent substantive session of the Council in order to enable the Executive Boards to present their conclusions to the segment on operational activities.

His delegation was greatly concerned by the recent trend to use the Executive Boards for purposes for which they were not mandated. Over the years, the funds and programmes ad gradually built up a high degree of credibility in their cooperation with developing countries, not least for the neutrality with which assistance was provided. That credibility would be at risk if boards continued to be used for political ends in the consideration of country programmes.

Ms. ASHRAF (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)) said that, like all the other specialized agencies, UNESCO was seeking new ways of cooperation and a better understanding of what

was needed to make its efforts viable at the national level. UNESCO had had excellent collaboration with UNDP and the World Bank in the global move towards education for all. UNESCO and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) collaborated very closely in the design and implementation of programmes for environmental education. Both at headquarters and in field offices, new partnerships and a renewed spirit of collegiality were in evidence.

Within the framework of mechanisms of the Administrative Committee on Coordination, UNESCO had joined the efforts of the system to provide team leadership at the country level. In its training of field staff, it emphasized the need to share information and to cooperate closely with UNDP and other United Nations representatives. It also believed that the United Nations team leader in member countries should make optimal use of the comparative advantages offered by the substantive agencies of the system.

Another initiative by UNDP which was in line with the broad aim of General Assembly resolution 47/199 was the new support-cost mechanism. While resource constraints had obliged UNDP to cut back most of its financial commitments, starting with the current year, the support-cost mechanism had been exempted from those reductions. UNESCO welcomed that decision and shared the Administrator's view that it was the most effective means of encouraging United Nations agencies to become more directly involved in programming activities.

Given the increased importance of upstream activities to international development cooperation, UNESCO had taken steps to strengthen its service capacity to Member States in that area by extending its diversified sector-analysis services to human resources development. Moreover, in order to strengthen its multisectoral upstream capacity, the first of a series of training seminars had been organized for headquarters staff. There was still need, however, for a better division of labour and a true partnership between all the actors in international cooperation for development. The creation of a joint UNDP/UNESCO task force to assess the successes and failures of past

cooperation, further develop the principles and areas of future partnerships and monitor the implementation of agreed activities was one step in that direction.

With regard to the Global Environmental Facility and the mechanisms established by UNDP, Member States should take the initiative in making the relevant requests for funding. For its part, UNESCO was ready to provide the technical assistance required in its fields of competence for the formulation and submission of those requests. It was useful to remember that Agenda 21 contained an unequivocal appeal for better cooperation between the funding institutions and the specialized agencies.

For several years, UNESCO had been submitting to its Executive Board a report on its operational activities for development undertaken within the framework of the United Nations system. That report summarized the main trends and policies governing the operational activities of the United Nations system and situated efforts by UNESCO in that context. The list of what UNESCO was doing was exhaustive and it was therefore important to focus on the concrete modalities of interaction in order to further strengthen the process of dialogue.

Mr. MUEGGE (United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)) said that there was no doubt that, within the overall system of international development cooperation, the specialized agencies would continue to play an important role as providers to Member States of objective policy and technical advice as well as untied financial and technical cooperation. There was also a growing need to link peace-making activities with development support through immediate post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation aimed at laying the foundation for sustained economic development.

All of those activities were being carried out against a background of severe financial constraints. Nevertheless, the United Nations system was seeking to improve coordination, promote decentralization and enhance the effectiveness of operational activities.

UNIDO proposed to contribute directly to the system-wide goals of socio-economic development, including the achievement of environmentally sustainable industrial development. In addition, it was sharpening its profile as the leading specialized agency for industrial development. In response to the priority needs of developing countries, it was focusing on providing support for industrial development in Member States and on enhancing international industrial cooperation in investment and technology. It hoped in that way to strengthen its role as an effective player in United Nations country teams thereby ensuring that industry and its priority subsectors were an integral element of overall United Nations country strategies.

One dimension of operational activities had been the trend towards upstream activities. There had also been increasing emphasis on providing advisory services on industrial policies and on the institutional framework which constituted the enabling environment for sustainable industrial development in an increasingly competitive global economy. The United Nations country strategy note was a very important concept in the context of which UNIDO proposed to launch a series of country support strategies for industrial development. It was also exploring joint UNDP/UNIDO programming activities and specific areas within the sustainable human development thrust launched by UNDP.

In addition, however, there was a demand for specific downstream services to industry, including environmental protection, energy saving and enhanced competitiveness. UNIDO also promoted contact-creating activities for investment in technological cooperation between private sector entities in developed and developing countries.

Against the background of the changing structures of United Nations operational programmes and the dwindling financial resources available for development cooperation, the rational division of labour was a key issue for all concerned. It was necessary to carefully examine the implications of the current organizational restructuring among and within United Nations organizations in order to avoid duplication. It was also of vital importance

to review the working arrangements between the specialized agencies and that part of the United Nations system which had access to financial resources for cooperation, primarily the Bretton Woods institutions. It was in the interest of all Member States that those financial resources should be effectively used to enable the specialized agencies to carry out their programmes in support of the agenda for development.

The meeting rose at 5.50 p.m.